



Mr. Laurence P. "Larry" Custodero

December 24, 1943 - June 19, 2017

NEW HARTFORD - Mr. Laurence P. "Larry" Custodero, age 73, joined family members who went before him when he passed away on Monday, June 19, 2017 at the Masonic Care Community of NY with his loving family and his faithful dog Roxie by his side. He battled with dignity and optimism to the very end... as he lived his life.

Born in Cheltenham, England on Christmas Eve in 1943, Laurence was the son of the late Florio "Amer" and Mary "Maura" (Costelloe) Custodero. At the age of two, Larry and his mother arrived in America aboard the British ship RMS Mauritania and settled in Utica. He was raised as a Catholic and was a communicant of St. Mary of Mt. Carmel/Blessed Sacrament Parish, where he received all his sacraments and lived a moral life. He attended Roscoe Conkling Elementary School and was a graduate of T.R. Proctor High School/Class of 1962. He excelled in football and baseball in high school and at Utica College of Syracuse University. In college he lettered in baseball and was instrumental in founding the school's Club Football team. He majored in Social Studies and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Education. In 1968 he married Theresa LaFache and of that union came the blessing of two daughters and a lifelong friendship. Larry was co-owner of the Dinghy Bar with his father and longtime friend, Tony Perrone. He also tended bar at Uncles Tavern, owned by his cousins, for more than 20 years. On May 27th, 1989 he married Barbara Wrape Corn, daughter of the late William and Patricia Wrape. Larry and Barbara were married for 28 years, and

they enjoyed their time together, having many gatherings with friends and family. Through this union, he gained a daughter, Jessica. Larry and Barb were then blessed with a son, Lawrence William, which completed his family. Larry was the quintessential teacher, teacher advocate, and mentor of so many students during his 32-year career with the Utica City School District, where he taught 5th and 6th grade students at Kernan Elementary School. He left a lasting imprint on their hearts. He also held many extra-curricular coaching positions including Freshman Football at Utica Free Academy, Junior High Basketball at Kernan Elementary School, and Freshman and Junior Varsity Baseball at JFK Junior High School. He gave all of his students his support, respect, and firm but fair guidelines, for which he is still remembered for to this day.

During his working years, he was an advocate for his co-workers and their vocation, not only as a member of the Utica Teachers' Association, but also as past Vice President and an outstanding negotiator until his retirement in 2001. He seamlessly continued his support of the area's teaching professionals by serving as full-time President of the Utica Teachers' Association for six consecutive two-year terms until his final retirement in 2013. Larry was dedicated beyond expectation, and even during his illness, he fought for health care and fairness of teaching contracts. He was, at the end of the day, respected by both his colleagues and the administration for his passion and knowledge.

He enjoyed the camaraderie of social events and was a gifted public speaker. He was a key figure in many local, charitable events including golf tournaments and the Greater Utica Heart Run & Walk. He also privately contributed to several organizations including Hospice & Palliative Care, Inc., the American Cancer Society, and the ASPCA.

Larry is perhaps most known for his unique, straight-forward humor. Those who knew him best, knew that the nicknames "Scary Larry" or "The Bear" did not reflect the man who was a sentimental soul, who wore his heart on his sleeve. Throughout his life, Larry strived for harmony and family unity, and he

protected all those he loved. Larry loved to be social, “hold court,” and to entertain his friends. A die-hard Yankees fan, he followed them to his last day and voiced his opinions about their shortcomings. He was the kind of guy that people gravitated toward. His appetite for life was immeasurable; he loved to eat, drink, and be merry!

Larry is survived by his wife, Barbara Jean; his children and their spouses, Kristin and Joseph Speciale, Kathryn Custodero, and their mother, Theresa Tripolone and her husband Carmine who were very important in Larry’s life, Jessica and Ryan Mortensen, and Lawrence “Mickey” Custodero; his grandchildren, Joseph and Christopher Speciale, and Zoe and Lily Mortensen; his brother and sister-in-law, Gordon “Butch” and “Kay” (Joseph) Custodero; and his sister, Maureen Fumarola. He also leaves behind his nieces and nephews including Marie Custodero (his goddaughter), Linda Custodero Virkler, Ann Custodero Aery, Theresa Nelson (his goddaughter), and Tony Fumarola; great-nieces, great-nephews, cousins, and in-laws, Joanne and Butch Sisti, William Wrape, Patie Cloutier, and Sundy and Jack Horn. The family is grateful to Larry’s physicians, Dr. Kenneth Visalli, and Dr. Kevin McCormick for their medical expertise; and the staff of the Saratoga Household of the Masonic Care Community who cared for Larry with such compassion and loving care. The family was comforted by the companionship and longtime friendship of Charles “Chipper” and Marianne Pronto, Bill Wrape, Richard “Doc” D’Alesandro, Norm Stamboly, John Russo, Vic Gazzilli, Butch and Joanne Sisti, the Joseph and LaFache families, and many others who offered their support.

Visitation will be held from 4:00-7:00 p.m. Friday at the Eannace Funeral Home, Inc, 932 South St., Utica. The family will remain until all have been seen. By family request, please omit flowers. Larry’s funeral service and Celebration of Life will commence on Saturday morning at 9:00 from the funeral home and at 10:00 at St. Mary of Mt. Carmel/Blessed Sacrament Parish, where Rev. James Cesta will offer his Mass of Christian Burial.

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN **23**. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Eannace Funeral Home, Inc.
932 South Street
corner of Hammond Ave.
Utica, NY 13501
(315) 724-6714
eannacefh@roadrunner.com
<https://www.eannacefuneralhome.com>

Funeral Service

JUN **24**. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Mary of Mt. Carmel/Blessed Sacrament Parish
648 Jay Street
Utica, NY 13501
(315) 735-1482
<https://www.mountcarmelblessedsacrament.com/>

Tribute Wall

KW

“ *My 6th grade teacher. All the way back in 1992. This man was a treasure. He will be missed forever. 😭* ”



Kate Whaley - August 05, 2023 at 08:50 PM

LL

“ *Gordie and family,
I am so sorry for your loss. I worked with Larry for many years on the union side. He was a strong, convicted man in his beliefs and drive to help all workers. He will be missed. God bless you all.* ”

Lorraine Laurino (secretary @ Hughes)

Lorraine Laurino - July 08, 2017 at 01:17 PM

AR

“ *Butch, Kay and the entire Custodero family:* ”

Our deepest sympathies and condolences for the loss of Larry. We were in line at Eannace for almost two hours but unfortunately had to leave before we had a chance to see you personally. The amount of people there just shows the tremendous impact Larry's life had on so many people.

The loss is difficult to bear but find comfort in the fact that his was a life well lived

Al and Lisa Rocci

Al Rocci - June 23, 2017 at 07:57 PM

ED

“ Grad classes at ‘Upper Division’

Respite in the Red Robin

Discussions at the Dingy

lobbying in Albany

NYSUT meetings everywhere

legal beverages

Holiday celebrations

love of family and family roots

jester extraordinaire / heart of gold

Untiring Advocate for public education and educators

full of fun; intolerance for fools

Indelible memories

RIP

My condolences to all the family especially Butch and Kay - he loved you all

ed blake

ed - June 23, 2017 at 01:08 PM

RZ

“ Rhonda Zangrilli-Russell lit a candle in memory of Mr. Laurence P. "Larry" Custodero



Rhonda Zangrilli-Russell - June 23, 2017 at 09:41 AM



“ Kindness and Honesty are so rare in this world. Mr. Custodero always showed me more of both than anyone could deserve. Rest In Peace Dear Sir.

Kyle Harris - June 23, 2017 at 08:24 AM

PG

“ A gentleman and steadfast advocate for area teachers. He will surely be missed by people in and out of the teaching profession. Sincere condolences to family and friends.

Phil Geraci

phil geraci - June 22, 2017 at 11:18 PM

Carrie DeRollo

“ Carrie DeRollo lit a candle in memory of Mr. Laurence P. "Larry" Custodero



Carrie DeRollo - June 22, 2017 at 05:25 PM

 Carrie DeRollo

“ *My 6th grade teacher, an amazing human being..My condolences to his family.. Heaven gaining an Angel is an understatement, heaven gained a SAINT*❤️

Carrie DeRollo - June 22, 2017 at 05:24 PM

DH

He was the best person in kernan school as a teacher and over all rounded spirit! Never will we forget him

Danielle Hinton-Jones - June 23, 2017 at 09:54 AM

PS

“ *Barbara, Mick and Custodero Family,
Sorry for your loss. Larry will be missed but not forgotten. My thoughts and prayers are with you.
Paul Skermont*

Paul Skermont - June 22, 2017 at 03:25 PM

TB

“ *My friends and I met Larry at the Big East tournament at Florio's in Little Italy. We became fast friends with this most gregarious of men . We would meet each time we were in NYC together even though we all rooted for different schools. We visited Larry in Utica and he and his friends came to Pittsburgh. Larry was one of those rare people who was larger than life and a wonderful man. He will be sorely missed. My sympathies to his family,whom I know he loved very much.*

Tom Baumann - June 22, 2017 at 10:50 AM

MW

“ MARY WISNER lit a candle in memory of Mr. Laurence P. "Larry" Custodero



MARY WISNER - June 22, 2017 at 08:50 AM

DS

“ My dearest friends,

It is never easy letting go but I hope there is comfort in knowing that Larry filled our hearts with laughter and memories that will last a lifetime.

Until we all meet again Larry, rest in peace knowing you left a legacy to be proud of.

Donna and Rich Schram

Donna Schram - June 22, 2017 at 07:00 AM



“ Mr C was my all time favorite teacher as a child. He was so caring and influential and I often think of him fondly. He will certainly be missed by all.

JoAnna Hazard - June 22, 2017 at 05:56 AM

 Luke Colenzo

“ We go back to the field of Quinn playground and the Start of Mt.Carmel little league . Always the stand up guy you loved to be around.

Luke Colenzo - June 22, 2017 at 05:39 AM

LF

“ *Lisa Fraccola lit a candle in memory of Mr. Laurence P. "Larry" Custodero*



Lisa Fraccola - June 21, 2017 at 09:08 PM

BE

“ *What a great sense of humor. We always shared a lot of laughs at Uncle's Tavern years ago. You will be missed Larry. RIP*

Bill Ellenwood - June 21, 2017 at 08:58 PM

RM

“ *A staunch and fellow union member; we shared many a beer and a laugh at A-Bay, Roaring Brook and NYC. Underneath that gruff exterior was a talented, kind hearted and generous man. The UTA has lost a giant, and Ellen and I have lost a friend. RIP Larry; you've left a void in many people's hearts.*
Dick and Ellen Moon

Richard Moon - June 21, 2017 at 06:02 PM

HJ

I am very sorry for your loss Mr. and Mrs. Moon, my deepest sympathy and condolences.... Heather Gallagher (7th grade student @ the parkway in w'boro)

Heather Jewett - June 22, 2017 at 02:30 AM

ND

Larry knew our teacher contracts to the letter. So many teachers are thankful for his guidance and dedication to the UTA. As big as he was in his work, likewise he was as much fun on the golf course. A good man who will be missed by so many. Our deepest condolences to Katie and the family.

Nick and Lorraine Dominick - June 23, 2017 at 06:10 PM

FS

“ Knowing Larry since our early teens brings back a number of enjoyable memories, from sharing good times with him and his family up to the recent times. Even during difficult periods, Larry would always find a way to look at the bright side of a situation. His positive personality, sense of humor and friendship will be missed by all who knew him. Our sincere sympathy to the entire Custodero family.

Frank & Carol

Frank & Carol Stagliano - June 21, 2017 at 04:32 PM

MH

“ Mary Hosey lit a candle in memory of Mr. Laurence P. "Larry" Custodero



Mary Hosey - June 21, 2017 at 03:59 PM

CM

“ Sorry for your loss family. Wish I could b there. Your in my thoughts and prayers.
Cherie carols daughter

Cherie matthews - June 21, 2017 at 10:48 AM

FG

“ Fred And Janice Greer lit a candle in memory of Mr. Laurence P. "Larry" Custodero



Fred and Janice Greer - June 21, 2017 at 09:56 AM

SB

“ Gordon so sorry for your loss, may he rest in peace.

sal barbero - June 21, 2017 at 05:48 AM

Ann
Payne

“ Ann Payne purchased the Dish Garden with Fresh Cut Flowers for the family of Mr. Laurence P. "Larry" Custodero.



Ann Payne - June 20, 2017 at 10:17 PM

Ann
Payne

“ When we were kids enjoying my grandparents' home on Owasco Lake, the high point of the summer was a visit from the Custodero cousins! They always brought the best pastries. I was probably an adult before I began to understand how we were related to the Custodero's, Rotundo's, May's, etc. We played baseball at Camp Columbus and Larry and Butchie were always the best players! I could listen to their mother Maura talk all day! I loved her accent. Amer was such a fun guy. Larry reminded me a lot of his father. These were (are) all good people, born of immigrant stock who left (and continue to leave) positive influences on their community. I'm proud to call them cousins. RIP. Larry. Love, cousin Ann laia Payne

Ann Payne - June 20, 2017 at 09:04 PM

DV

*I always enjoyed being in Larry's company. He had a quick wit and always a smile
May he Rest In Peace
Don Virkler*

don virkler - June 21, 2017 at 04:32 PM

SH

“ *Heaven gained a Angel.*

shady - June 20, 2017 at 05:50 PM

JH

Rip. Old friend you where a good teacher

Jeffrey Holland h - June 21, 2017 at 08:09 PM

FL

*Kristin and family,
So sorry for your loss. You are all in our prayers.
Flo, Tom and Amanda DeSimone*

Flo - June 22, 2017 at 07:38 AM



he was my 6th grade teacher...very funny and loved my all R,I,P

Kelly Litz - June 22, 2017 at 05:50 PM

PC

*My condolences to Larry's family. Like so many teachers, I met Larry through our NYSUT union work. I always knew his genuine concern, knowledge, and support of his colleagues. Larry accomplished some almost insurmountable outcomes as he worked with the UTA and the district. I will remember his ability to make us laugh during serious discussions with Oneida County Presidents. Larry, I'm glad I got to know you for a little while, and you will be missed by so many!
Peg (Robinson) Corbett*

Peg Corbett - June 26, 2017 at 10:31 PM